

# TWIN CITY LINES

Winter 2008





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## TWIN CITY LINES

Twin City Lines is published quarterly by the

**Minnesota Streetcar Museum**  
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The Minnesota Streetcar Museum operates the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line in Minneapolis and the Excelsior Streetcar Line in Excelsior. Its mission is to preserve Minnesota's electric railway heritage.

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## MSM NEWS SUMMARY

See Streetcar Currents - ([www.trolleyride.org](http://www.trolleyride.org)) for the full story.

### Isaacs carbarn sprinkler fund grows

This year's MSM Annual Appeal is focused on the fire suppression sprinkler system for the Isaacs Carbarn at Lake Harriet. To date, over \$60,000 has been raised, including \$11,256 since November 1st. The goal is \$100,000. The MSM Board has authorized Phase One of the project, the city water hookup.

### MSM archive update

Since the last issue of Twin City Lines, the following items have been added to the Museum archive:

- \* 28 volumes of valuation reports prepared for TCRT in 1916, 1920 and 1922. The reports count and describe every asset the company owned, an invaluable source for researchers. They were stored for many years by Russell Olson.

- \* Individual index cards, one for every streetcar and non-revenue work car owned by TCRT. These were also stored by Russell Olson.

- \* Copies of 45 historic photos of the Fargo-Moorhead Street Railway, courtesy of North Dakota State University, Clay County Historical Society and Moorhead State University. Many of these photos appear in this issue of TCL.

- \* Member Gordon C. Bassett has donated 74 negatives of Twin City streetcars in the 1940s and 50s.

- \* Streetcar materials from the collection of Joseph Zalusky, thanks to Michael E. Miller, who received them several years

ago when he was MTM Chair. There are several scrapbooks of vintage transfers and other TCRT paperwork, reports on the early days of TCRT, newspaper clippings, a few photos and a couple of early Twin Cities maps. Of particular interest is a set of 20 TCRT and Duluth promotional pamphlets, including Big Island, Twin Cities Today and several that we did not have.

- \* MSM members regularly patrol eBay, looking for Minnesota streetcar photos and artifacts. In January the Museum purchased a collection of over 300 Duluth Street Railway negatives. It had been assembled by a private collector in Duluth. Several additional single photos have also been purchased.

The Minnesota Reflections website, a compendium of the best photos from the state's small historical societies and museums, now contains over 250 additional MSM photos, postcards, color slides and TCRT marketing materials. That brings the total of MSM items on the website to 673. To view them, go to [www.trolleyride.org](http://www.trolleyride.org) and click on Historic Photos.

### Carbarn inventory complete

Since it opened in 1970, the Isaacs Carbarn has been expanded three times and has been filled with a large, but uncatalogued inventory of streetcar parts, tools and machinery. Beginning last year, Shop Foreman John Prestholdt undertook an inventory of the carbarn's contents. He tallied over 400 streetcar parts. Beside making for a more orderly shop, now we'll know what we have and where to find it. Some parts will also be declared surplus and made available for either sale or trade.

### Car 265's seats repainted

Volunteers at the Isaacs carbarn have completed the repair and repainting of all the rattan seats in streetcar #265. Seats are a constant wear item, yet all are vintage originals, except for some which have been recovered with new rattan.

### Excelsior's biggest year yet

MSM's Excelsior Streetcar Line finished the 2007 season with 6447 riders. That's the biggest year ever, 17 percent ahead of 2006. The Streetcar 1239 Centennial, Halloween Ghost Trolley and the Santa Claus Special contributed to that total.

### Community Directors appointed

The MSM has recruited a pair of long-time, well respected business owners to serve on the museum's Board of Directors. Bob Bayers owns Bayers' Do-It-Best Hardware, an institution in the Linden Hills neighborhood near the Como-Harriet Line. Darel Leipold owns Leipold's, long a fixture on Water Street in Excelsior. Welcome to both of them.

## THE HISTORY OF 1300

We think of our streetcar 1300 as being assigned to East Side Station, where it worked the Como-Harriet Line. That's true for part of its life, but it's been all over the system in previous years. Here's the summary, compiled by Russ Olson from Edwin Nelson's notes.

- \* April 1908 Car 1300 constructed at Snelling Shops. Assigned to Snelling Station. Because it was a "fast" car, it worked the three interurban lines, Como-Harriet, Selby-Lake and Minneapolis-St. Paul, plus the new

**Front cover:** This issue's cover story is the streetcars of Fargo-Moorhead. By 1923, the system was run by a fleet of 16 single truck Birneys. The last of these, #28, is now owned by MSM. Two of them are southbound on Broadway between Northern Pacific Avenue and the NP tracks, the heart of downtown Fargo. North Dakota State University collection.

**Inside front cover:** One of the original seven Fargo-Moorhead 1904-built Niles streetcars travels east on Front Street. Moorhead State University collection.



interurban via Fort Snelling in 1909. From 1911 to 1920, #1300 worked Minneapolis-St. Paul.

- \* April 1920 Transferred to Lake Street Station.

- \* August 1921 Transferred to Duluth Station

- \* 1928 Rebuilt with front exit doors and triple rear gates.

- \* December 1928 Assigned to East Side Station.

- \* November 1931 Rebuilt to current 1-2 man configuration with air-operated doors. Assigned to Lake Street Station.

- \* February 1934 Transferred to Snelling Station.

- \* July or October 1934 Transferred to East Side Station for the rest of its career.

## FARGO AND MOORHEAD ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAY:

1904-1937

By Mark Peihl, Executive Director,  
Clay County Historical Society

*Reprinted with permission from the  
Clay County Historical Society newsletter*

Editor's note: Last summer John Diers and the editor visited Fargo-Moorhead to see what we could find on the local streetcar system. Readers may recall a pictorial on the Moorhead streetcars in the Spring 2003 Minnegazette. On this trip we visited the Clay County Historical Society, Moorhead State University and Regional History Center at North Dakota State University. We returned with the photos that appear in this article, plus the following story from Mark Peihl.

Most nice mornings I like to walk the mile and a half from my place to work but it's comforting to know that if I get behind or lazy I can always stroll down the block and around the corner and wait a minute or two for a Metro Area Bus. I just drop a token into the



**Original streetcars #3 and 5 met at the passing siding on Broadway just south of Northern Pacific Avenue. This was the system's major transfer point. Note that both cars are loading and unloading passengers and the motorman of the car at left is leaning out the front window to talk to a man on the ground. Also, two motorman (one might be a supervisor) are standing in the street at left, talking to a policeman. One may be assigned to a Moorhead car, sitting on the track that curves left. Cars probably paused here to ensure that connections are made. North Dakota State University collection.**

box and I'm whisked downtown in seven minutes flat. But before waxing too warmly over the wonders of modern mass transit, it's interesting to note that 100 years ago I could have caught a quick, comfortable ride from the same corner, along more or less the same route. The trip would have cost a nickel and instead of a diesel powered bus, my conveyance would have been a streetcar of the Fargo and Moorhead

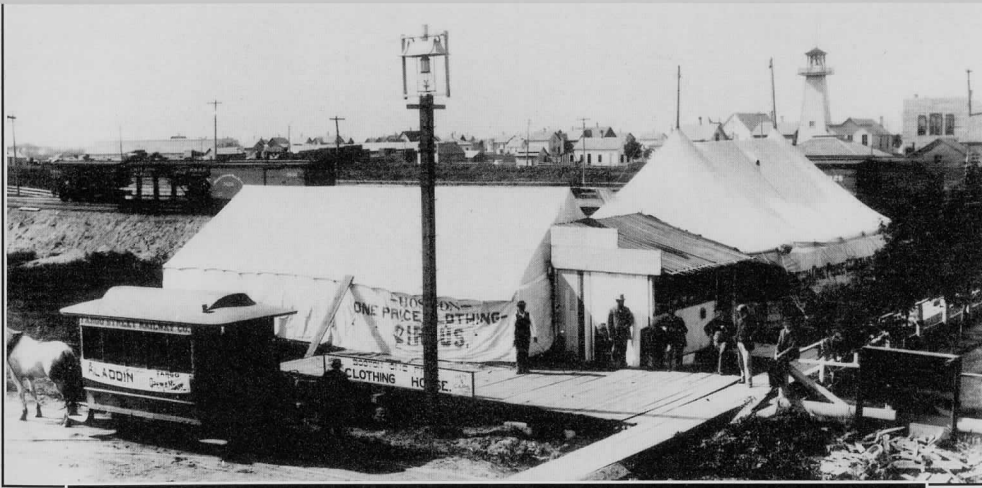
Electric Street Railway Company.

In the 1870s, neither Moorhead nor Fargo had much need for a system to move folks around the cities. Most of the 1500 or so souls in the twin towns in 1875 lived within easy walking distance of the business districts and each other. But by the early 1880s both cities had grown and spread out. Walking had become less convenient. Flush from a recent building boom,

Fargo investors in 1882 started the area's first horsecar line. It was a spectacular failure.

Moving large numbers of people over regular routes on a tight schedule required a fast AND comfortable ride. Fargo's less than smooth streets ruled out carriages. The local entrepreneurs, like those in many U. S. cities, took a cue from the steam railroads and laid down tracks. Steam engines were too





**This is the only photo we were able to find of the short lived Fargo horsecar line. This appears to be on Front Street, probably near Broadway and the Northern Pacific depot. University of North Dakota collection.**

heavy and internal combustion engines were still 25 years in the future so they used horse drawn cars. Tracks ran south on Broadway from the Great Northern tracks to Main Avenue (later renamed Front Street), then west and south past the new suburbs and out onto the thinly populated prairies.

Unfortunately, they laid the tracks directly on Fargo's gumbo streets. The

relatively light cars quickly pounded the rails into the mud. After four months of intermittent service, the company's car barn burned to the ground destroying all their rolling stock. They never rebuilt. The investors' rails, like their money, sank into the earth.

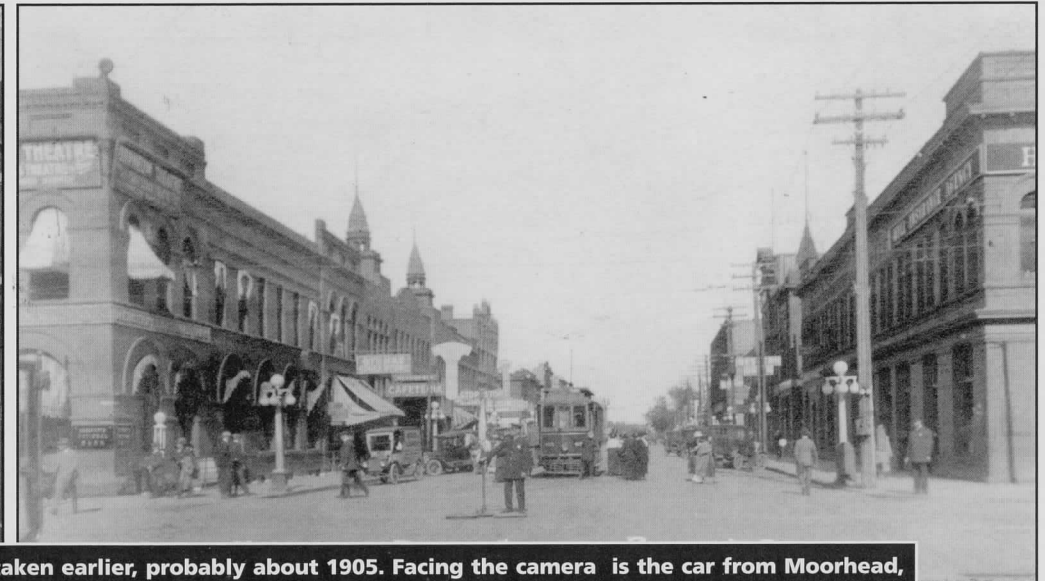
By the late 1880s, breakthroughs in electric streetcar technology gave mass

transit dreamers another option for power. A private company, Fargo Gas and Electric, extended a street light system into Moorhead in 1891. Shortly after, they spun off a subsidiary, the Fargo and Moorhead Street Railway, to provide electric streetcar service. They proposed to build a rail loop linking the downtown areas of the two cities. In return they asked for a franchise granting them the use of the cities' streets and bridges for 50 years. Construction would take two years. Fargo apparently OK'd the scheme but Moorheadites were skeptical. Local businessmen claimed that the cars would not bring shoppers to their stores but would only make it easier for their customers to buy in Fargo. The Moorhead City Council offered a 20-year franchise, asked the company to extend the line to the new Normal School (now Moorhead State University) and finish the project in one year. Fargo, Gas and Electric said, "No dice" and went back to selling power. Moorhead built its own municipally owned water and power plant in 1895.

In 1902 a group of Pennsylvania businessmen revived the street railway idea. The cities agreed to their terms but the group developed money problems. Local investors, headed by North Dakota Congressman and future Governor L.B. Hanna, bought out the Pennsylvanians and negotiated a new deal with Fargo. Again, Moorhead hesitated. Residents worried about losing the use of the North Bridge (where the street railway planned to cross the Red River) and who would pay for removing the rails if the company went under.

In 1904 the City of Moorhead required the streetcar company to build a streetcar-only bridge from Fargo to Moorhead's Front Street (Center Avenue) by Feb. 1, 1907. It was never done and streetcars used the North Bridge for their entire history.

The routes in Fargo included loops north and south of downtown and a branch to Oak Grove Park. In Moorhead rails initially ran east from the North Bridge to 4th St., then south to Front Street (then Center Avenue),



**Both views look east on Northern Pacific Avenue from Broadway. The photo at left was taken earlier, probably about 1905. Facing the camera is the car from Moorhead, which clearly is having a timed meet with the car at right on Broadway. That odd looking shed on the sidewalk is probably an ex-TCRT single truck streetcar, modified for use as an inspector's shanty. The other photo dates from about 1920. The streetcar is one of the open cars purchased from "O. Ry. & Light Co.". We don't know what the "O" stands for. Both North Dakota State University collection.**



In both photos the camera is looking west on Northern Pacific Avenue from 5th Street. Plow A3 and flatcar #100 are turning off 5th Street during a rare freight move. The other photo shows a Moorhead-bound Birney carrying a destination sign that appears to say "Teachers College", referring to Moorhead State Teachers College, a later name for the State Normal School. Both North Dakota State University collection.

east to 6th St., south to 5th Ave. S., east to 9th St., south to 7th Ave. S. and east to the Normal School. The following year the company added a line up 10th St. from Front to the Clay County Courthouse on 8th Ave. N.

Workmen laid the rails 4 feet 8 1/2 inches apart, the standard railroad

gauge then and today. The rails in downtown areas weighed 70 pounds to the yard, 60 pounds in the suburbs. The heavily ballasted ties lay 12 inches apart.

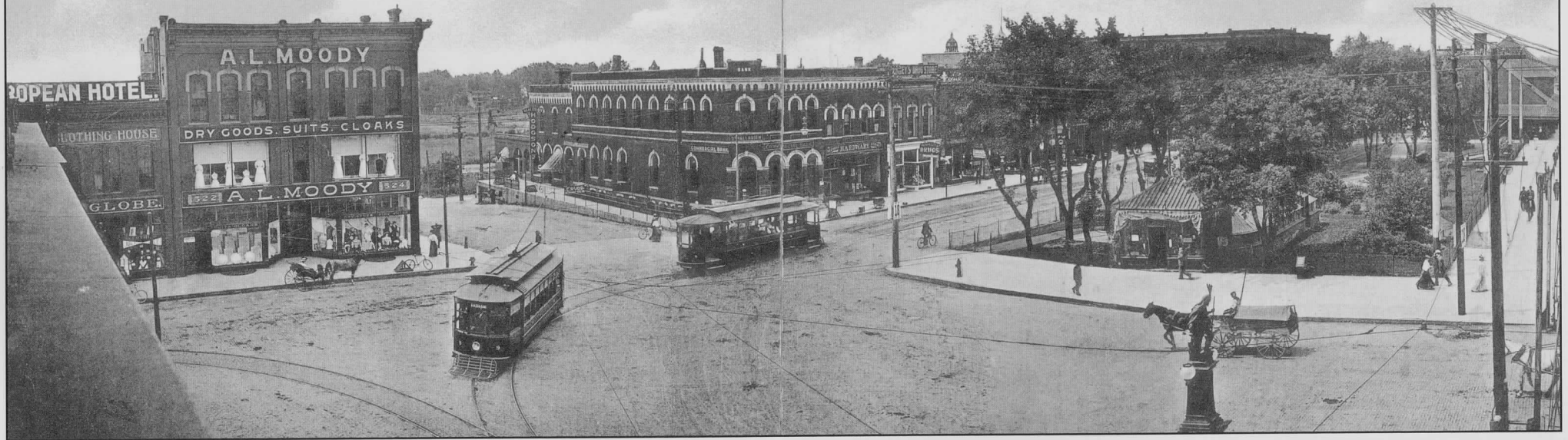
Union Light, Heat and Power Company of Fargo provided electricity to run the cars from a specially installed 150 kilowatt, 550 volt steam powered direct current generator. The dirt flew fast and furiously in October and November 1904 as the railway company pushed to completion. At one point 150 men worked on the line to the Normal School alone. Finally, regular service began in Fargo on Thanksgiving Day, November 24. Moorhead's cars rolled December 2.

Moorhead residents' fears of the company's failure disappeared quickly. The streetcars were wildly popular. The Fargo Forum reported that 10,000 folks took a ride the first day. The trolleys didn't scare horses and sharing the bridge caused no problems. Streetcars rumbled cheerfully over the North Bridge for 33 years.

The company began with seven cars and a car barn with space for twice that many. But they expanded so fast that in 1906, only years later, the company had to build a new, larger car shop near Fargo's Milwaukee Road depot. The old building became Fargo Foundry and remains in existence as part of the MidAmerica Steel complex that now occupies the spot.

The cars were not the little Kodak yellow trolleys many local residents remember from the 1920s and '30s. The first seven were ordered from the Niles Car Manufacturing Company in Ohio. The closed, 30 passenger cars were real works of art, featuring hardwood paneling inside, double thick windows and circulating hot water heat for comfort in winter, rattan seats and gold pin striping. In photos they appear shiny and dark, perhaps black, but several years ago the late Helmer Lee of Moorhead told me he remembered them as dark green. A most distinctive





feature was the "monitor roof". The center section of the roof was raised. Transom style windows in the sides and ends of this "clerestory" provided better light and ventilation.

The cars were built for two-man service. The motorman stood in an enclosed vestibule in the front of the car and a conductor was stationed in an identical vestibule in the rear. Passengers entered through a door on the right rear side. The fare was a nickel (4 cents for students), but many folks bought books of 21 paper tickets for a dollar.

Additional cars purchased in 1905 and 1906 included several previously owned by the Twin City Rapid Transit Company, some open cars for summer use and a snowplow. Also in 1906, streetcars began carrying mail three times daily between Fargo and Moorhead.

The streetcar line helped fuel a building boom in south Moorhead. According to Moorhead State history professor Paul Harris, the line had a tremendous impact on development in the area between MSU and north of Concordia College. Until the trolleys arrived, folks living there needed a

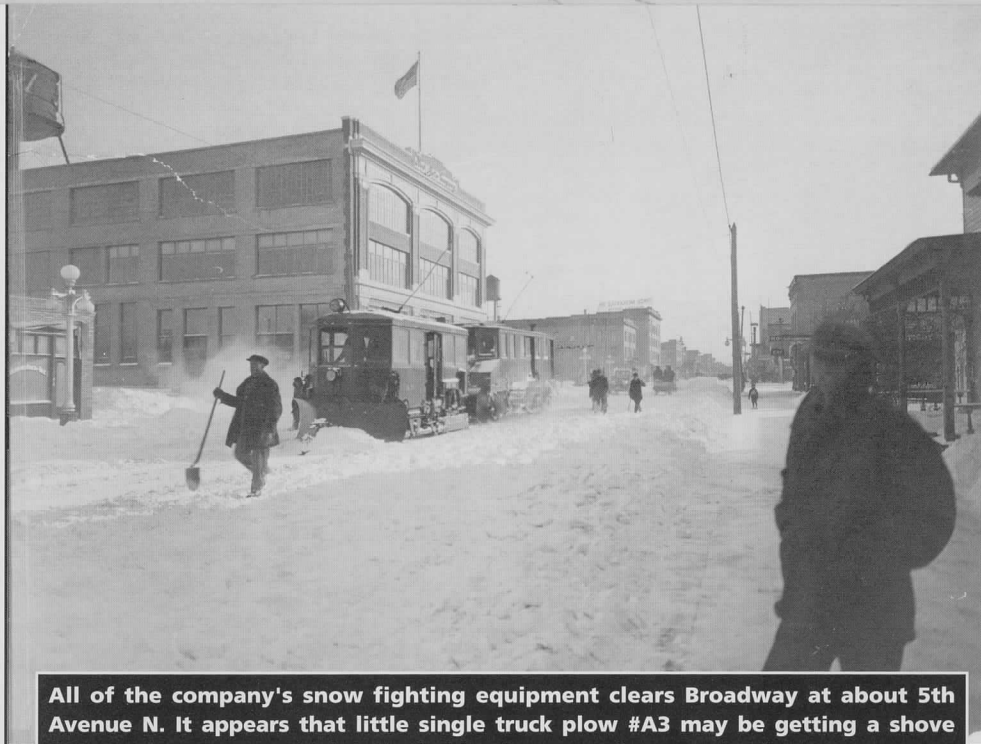
horse and buggy to get to downtown Fargo and Moorhead. That meant having a barn and lots of space. Streetcar transportation allowed the area to be broken up into much smaller lots for many more houses. Real estate developer E. J. Wheeler was one of those who built many homes in the area including a string of nearly identical houses along the west side of 7th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues S.

During these early years the street railway's only connection with the power company was their contract to buy electricity. That soon changed. In 1902 Pennsylvania native Henry M. Byllesby started a company to buy small, struggling utility companies and build them into going concerns. He was quite successful. By August 1910 Byllesby's Consumers' Power Company had acquired 16 such utilities. That month he added number 17, the Union Light, Heat and Power Company in Fargo. A year later, Consumers' Power also bought the Fargo and



Just south of the Northern Pacific tracks, the South Loop line turned both east and west on Front Street. Here are two views of that intersection. The bottom photo looks west towards the NP depot, which still stands. Both North Dakota State University collection.





**All of the company's snow fighting equipment clears Broadway at about 5th Avenue N. It appears that little single truck plow #A3 may be getting a shove from sweeper #A2, which is probably also sweeping out the flangeways. Note the Great Northern grade crossing. The GN depot is out of sight around the corner. North Dakota State University collection.**

Moorhead Electric Street Railway and announced plans to extend their lines.

The company's rails reached to all areas of Moorhead except the part of the Second Ward between Concordia College and the Red River. Second Warders organized and petitioned the new owners to build tracks to their neighborhood. The railway refused, claiming a line that close to downtown would not pay. They were looking east toward Dilworth.

In 1906 the Northern Pacific Railroad moved their roundhouse, car repair shops and division headquarters out of their cramped quarters west of downtown Fargo to a tiny siding east of Moorhead named Dilworth. The new village quickly grew to several hundred. But hundreds of other NP employees stayed in Fargo-Moorhead, riding to and from work on a special "shop train."

When the NP decided to end the

shop train as a cost cutting measure, the street railway saw a custom-made market. Also, the growing community had no general electric supplier. By extending their line to Dilworth, Consumers' Power could sell both transportation and electricity to the town's residents.

In 1912, the streetcar line's owners negotiated a new 25 year franchise with Fargo and Moorhead and laid rails to Dilworth. They ran east from 10th Street on 2nd Avenue North to the Moorhead city limits, then jogged north through open country to connect with Dilworth's 1st Avenue N. The rails followed 1st Avenue to Shapland Street (now 2nd Street N. E.) then south to Front Street (2nd Avenue S. E.) and east on Front to a little past Wales Street (5th Street SE) ending just north of the Dilworth railroad yards. The new track totaled 3.65 miles. Regular hourly service from Fargo began December 10



**Two views of Fargo track. The outer portion of the State Fairgrounds line ran side of the road through open country. This line may have been shortened to 14th Avenue N. in the 1920s. More typical was this in-street trackage on N. 4th St., shown during repaving. Both North Dakota State University collection.**





**A Birney from Moorhead, carrying a "Short Line" sign, has exited the North Bridge over the Red River and entered Northern Pacific Avenue. North Dakota State University collection.**

with a huge celebration. Shortly thereafter the Dilworth cars, referred to as "interurbans" in newspaper accounts, began carrying the mail.

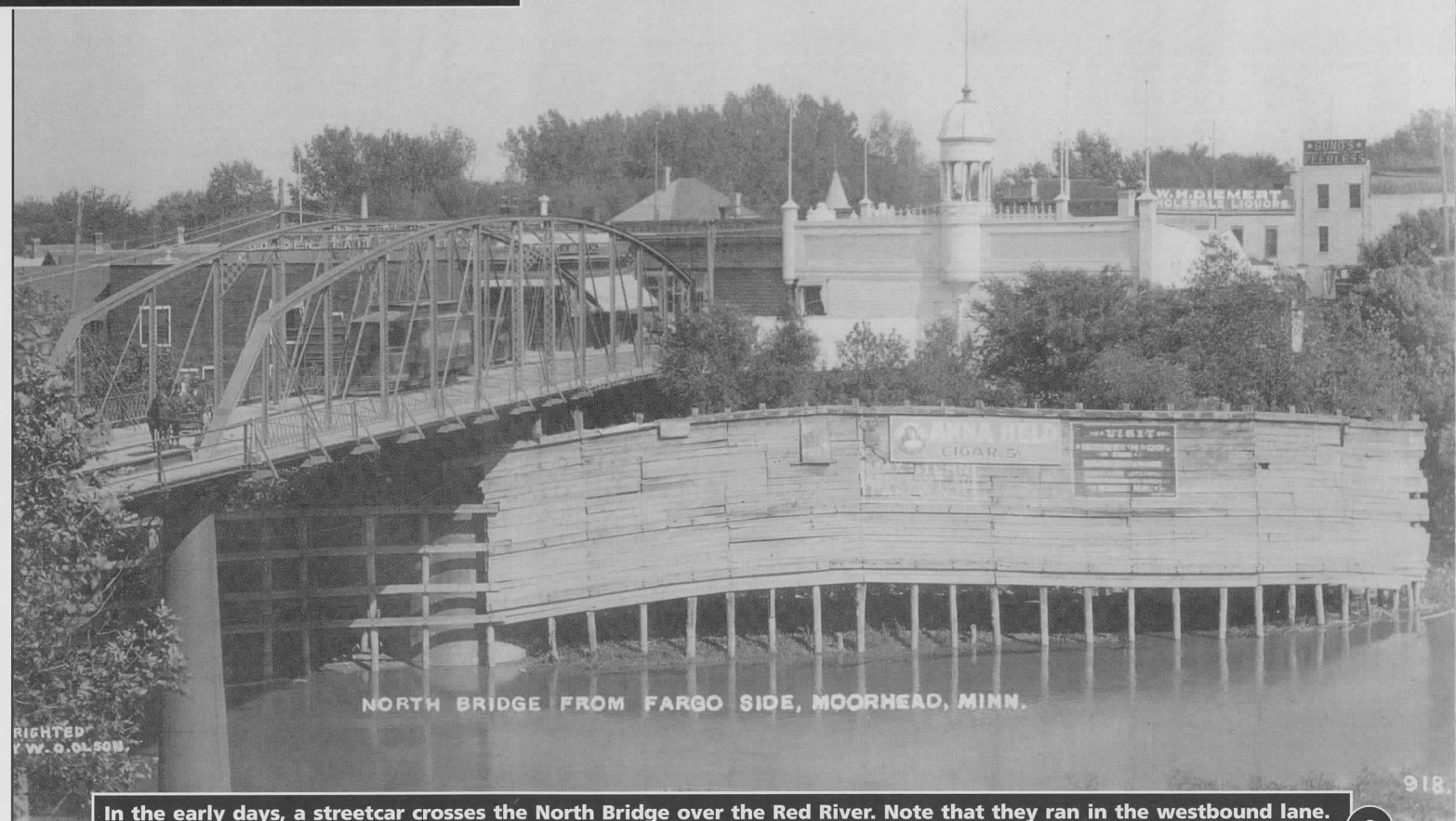
In 1916, Consumers' Power Company changed its name to Northern States Power. Things were looking up for the company. But after World War I ended in 1918, inflation drove operating costs up. The company, locked into a 5-cent fare by its franchise, began to feel squeezed. They also faced new competition - automobiles. Hardly seen in 1904, fifteen years later autos dominated Moorhead's streets. As garages popped up in suburban back yards, ridership fell.

The company made a major cost cutting move too. In 1920 it began the switch to a new style car - the double-ended safety or "Birney" car. Named for one of its principal inventors, Charles Birney, the new cars revolutionized the streetcar business. Birneys carried the same number of passengers as the older cars but were lighter and more energy efficient. Most importantly, they required only a motorman. No conductor was needed to collect fares. Passengers entered the

car through the front door and dropped their fares into a box, just as bus riders do today. The company switched to metal discount tokens instead of paper tickets. Riders could buy four quarter-sized tokens for 25 cents or 17 dime-sized ones for a dollar. The cost savings allowed the company to increase the number of cars on each route. Cars passed any given point every 15-20 minutes instead of every 30-60 as before.

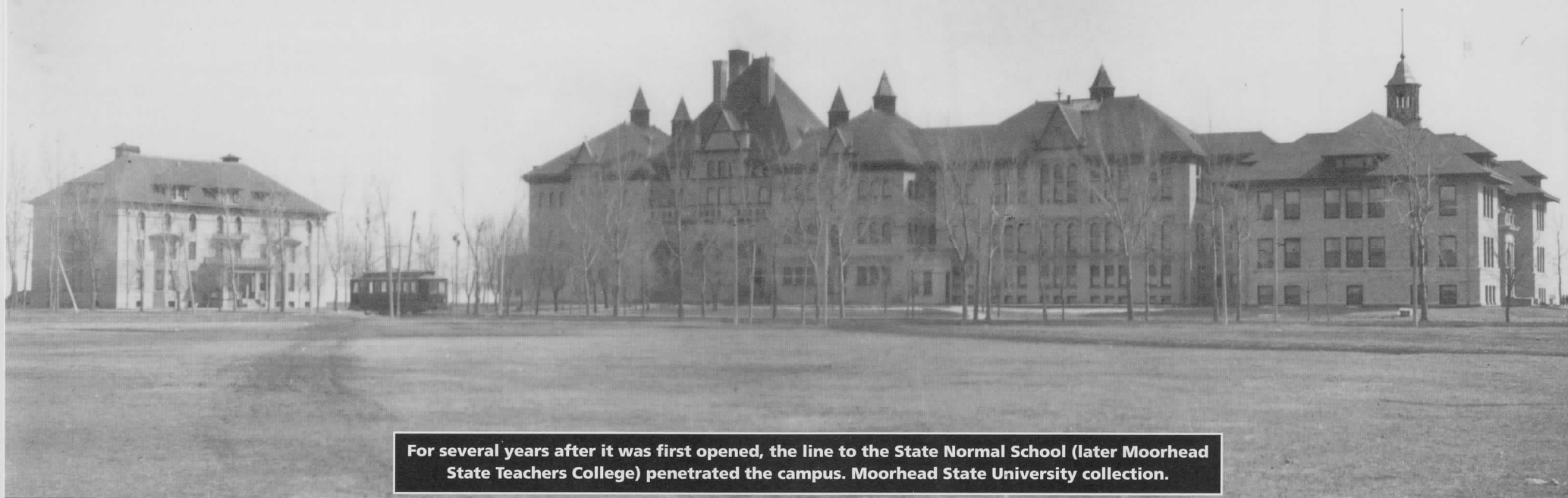
The Birneys were painted yellow for better night visibility and featured colored signal lights to identify which route they ran on. The Normal School trolley carried a red signal; the courthouse car, a green one.

When the company asked the city for a two-cent fare increase, the Second



**In the early days, a streetcar crosses the North Bridge over the Red River. Note that they ran in the westbound lane. The turreted building is a saloon, one of several along 1st Street by the river. Clay County Historical Society collection.**





**For several years after it was first opened, the line to the State Normal School (later Moorhead State Teachers College) penetrated the campus. Moorhead State University collection.**



**A car from Fargo has just turned from 4th Street onto Front Street in Moorhead. Clay County Historical Society collection.**

Ward residents smelled a new opportunity. The city agreed to the increase but required the company to extend a line into the neighborhood. On September 12, 1923, the "Concordia Route" began running from Center Avenue down 6th Street to 8th Avenue S. then west to 2nd Street and north to 6th Avenue S. Birney #28, now owned by MSM, was purchased in 1923 specifically for the Concordia line, the company's last new streetcar. In order to run the new route with only one car, it terminated in downtown Moorhead.

Many local residents remember the trolleys fondly. The cars carried woven wire fenders, front and back, designed to trip up and catch careless pedestrians rather than run them over. Marion Gillespie remembers often jumping onto the back fender on the courthouse trolley for a free, if somewhat dangerous, ride to visit a neighborhood friend. The late Willard Knapp of Moorhead told me that he did the same but when he wanted to get off, he'd yank the rope running to





**Bound for Fargo, a Birney on the State Teachers College line travels Front Street through downtown Moorhead between 4th and 6th Streets. Clay County Historical Society collection.**

the trolley pole, pulling the trolley off the overhead wire, stopping the car in its tracks. Willy and his friends would run like heck while the angry motorman replaced his trolley. He also said that a well placed, hardpacked snowball could affect a similar result.

Motorman August Swanson began driving streetcars in 1912. In a 1937 Fargo Forum interview he recalled problems with pickpockets during

State Fair days; working long hours, short-handed during the flu epidemic of 1918-1919; light bulb stealing, singing college students going home from football games and "tougher days when returning saloon patrons soiled his car with blood."

The fare increase and the Birney cars helped the company but the internal combustion engine was gaining on streetcar lines in the 1920s. In 1926 NSP

spun off a new subsidiary, Northern Transit Company, to run busses to supplement and later replace the trolleys. According to track mileages compiled by Russell Olson, it appears that two miles of Fargo track was abandoned in 1928, and an additional mile in 1934. One guess is that this included the Oak Grove line and perhaps outer end of the State Fairgrounds line. They were probably

replaced by buses. The North Bridge was replaced by the 1st Avenue N. Bridge in 1930 for all traffic except trolleys and pedestrians.

In 1937 the Fargo and Moorhead Electric Street Railway Company's 25-year lease expired. NSP (probably with a sigh of relief) announced that it was abandoning the trolley line and sold the Northern Transit bus company to a Fargo oil dealer.

The last Moorhead local car ran on June 10, 1937. On July 1, Moorhead cafe owner William H. Diemert chartered car number 14 for a special, final run to Dilworth and back. After Diemert and guests stepped off about midnight, car 14 rumbled across the North Bridge to the car barn and streetcars in Clay County became a thing of the past. The

### Fargo, Moorhead & Dilworth TIME TABLE

In Effect Dec. 15, 1912

Fargo	Moorhead	Dilworth
6 22 a m	6 30 a m	6 54 a m
7 22 a m	7 30 a m	8 02 a m
8 30 a m	8 37 a m	9 02 a m
9 30 a m	9 37 a m	10 02 a m
10 30 a m	10 37 a m	11 09 a m
11 37 a m	11 45 a m	12 09 p m
12 37 p m	12 45 p m	1 09 p m
1 37 p m	1 45 p m	2 09 p m
2 37 p m	2 45 p m	3 18 p m
3 46 p m	3 55 p m	4 13 p m
4 40 p m	4 49 p m	5 07 p m
5 34 p m	5 43 p m	6 01 p m
6 28 p m	6 37 p m	6 55 p m
7 22 p m	7 31 p m	7 49 p m
8 16 p m	8 25 p m	8 43 p m
9 10 p m	9 19 p m	9 54 p m
10 22 p m	10 30 p m	11 02 p m
11 30+ p m	11 37+ p m	11 58+ p m

± Last car leaving

### SUNDAY SCHEDULE

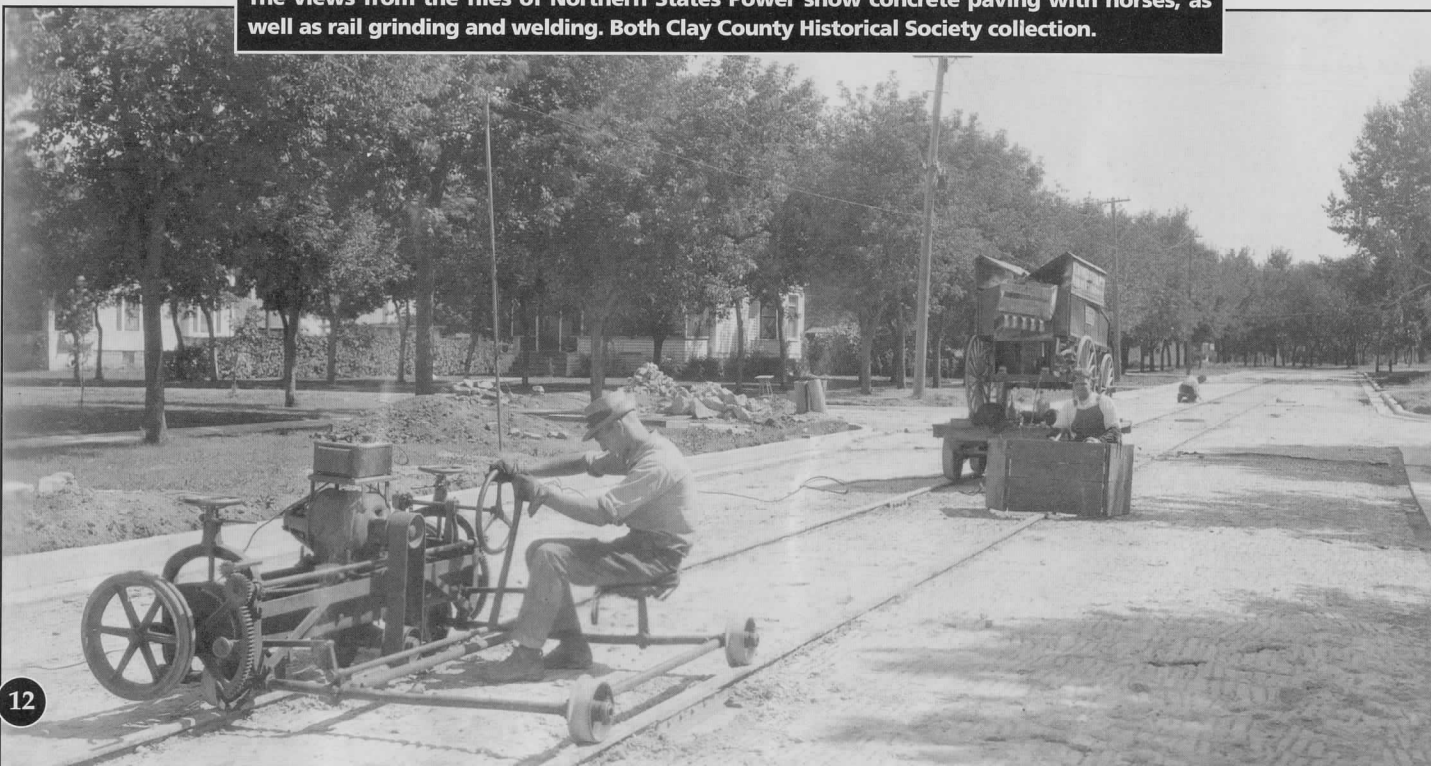
Fargo	Moorhead	Dilworth
6 22 a m	6 30 a m	6 54 a m
7 22 a m	7 30 a m	8 02 a m
8 30 a m	8 37 a m	9 02 a m
9 30 a m	9 37 a m	10 02 a m
10 30 a m	10 37 a m	11 09 a m
11 37 a m	11 45 a m	12 09 p m
12 37 p m	12 45 p m	1 09 p m
1 37 p m	1 45 p m	2 09 p m
2 37 p m	2 45 p m	3 09 p m
3 37 p m	3 45 p m	4 09 p m
4 37 p m	4 45 p m	5 09 p m
5 37 p m	5 45 p m	6 09 p m
6 37 p m	6 45 p m	7 09 p m
7 37 p m	7 45 p m	8 09 p m
8 37 p m	8 45 p m	9 09 p m
9 37 p m	9 45 p m	10 03 p m
10 30 p m	10 37 p m	11 02 p m
11 30+ p m	11 37+ p m	11 58+ p m

± Last car leaving

Clay County Historical Society collection



**The last expansion of the Fargo-Moorhead system was the 1923 line to Concordia College. The views from the files of Northern States Power show concrete paving with horses, as well as rail grinding and welding. Both Clay County Historical Society collection.**



last Fargo car traversed the South Loop line on August 21, 1937.

The crumbling North Bridge remained standing until 1942 when it was torn down for scrap for the war effort. The rails themselves were also yanked from the streets to be turned into tanks and battleships, although some were uncovered during a 1974 repaving project.

According to some accounts, many of the cars were stacked like cordwood at Fargo's Mickelson Field and burned. The remaining metal was hauled off for scrap. A few reportedly survived as lake cabins and we've heard of one in private hands and another mouldering in a shelterbelt southwest of Fargo. In 2003, the body of Birney #28, located on a farm, was auctioned off on Ebay. It was purchased by the Minnesota Streetcar Museum and is currently inside a shed in North Mankato awaiting restoration. It may be the last remnant of the trolleys that screeched and clanged around the streets of Fargo-Moorhead for 33 years.

**In 1912 a steam powered construction train is spreading ballast along the Dilworth interurban line in the open country east of Moorhead. The overhead wire poles have all been placed. The ones with crossbucks will soon bring the first electric power power to Dilworth. A power line marked the trolley route to this day. Clay County Historical Society collection.**

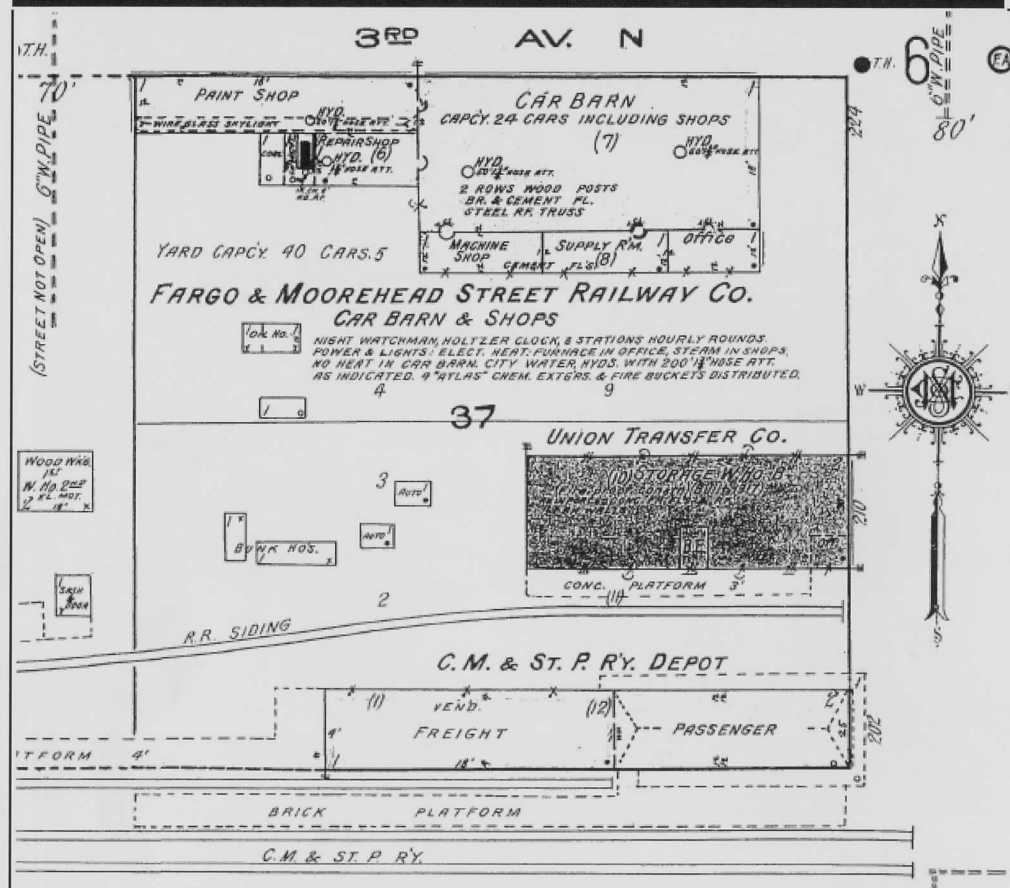


We're not sure where this was taken, but it appears to show either rail welding or bonding. Clay County Historical Society collection.





The 1906 carbarn stood at the corner of 3rd Avenue N. and 4th Street in Fargo, as shown in this Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from 1922. The Milwaukee Road depot and freight house occupied the other end of the block. Clay County Historical Society collection.

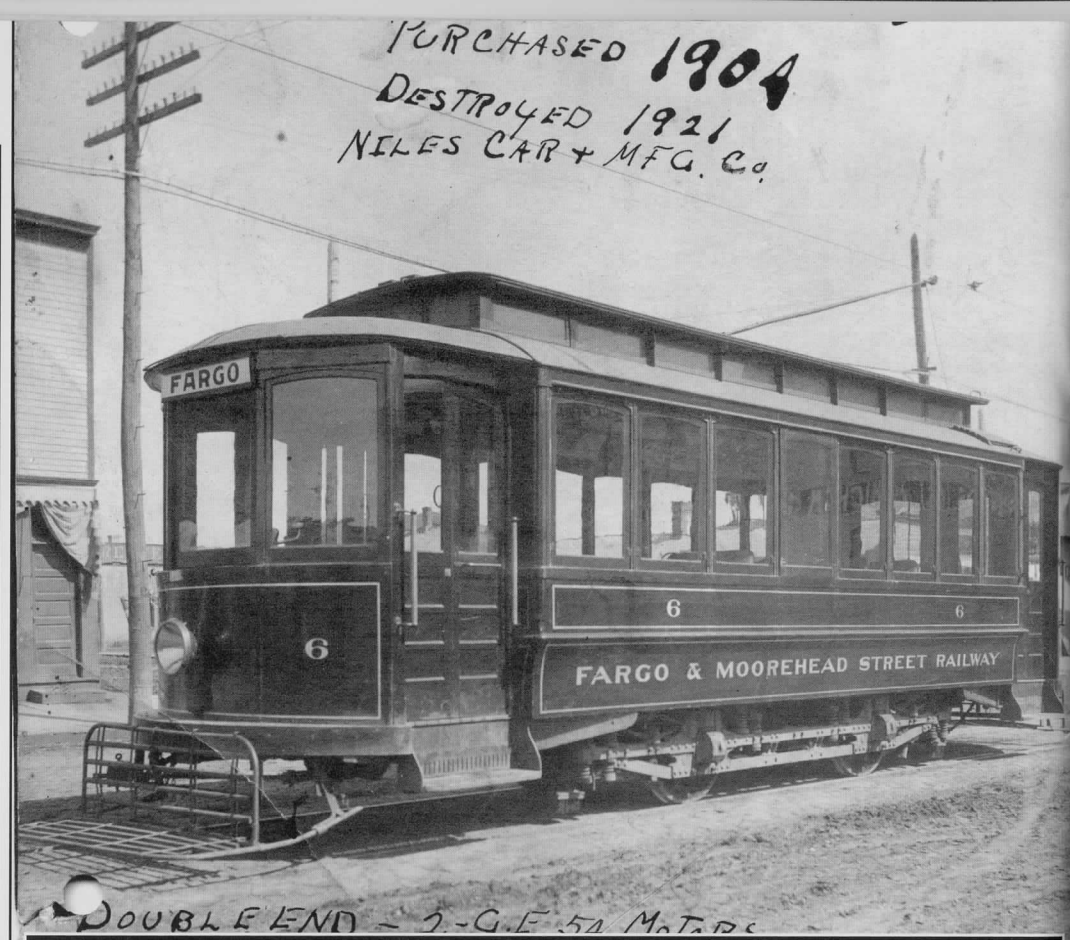


## Fargo-Moorhead Streetcar Roster

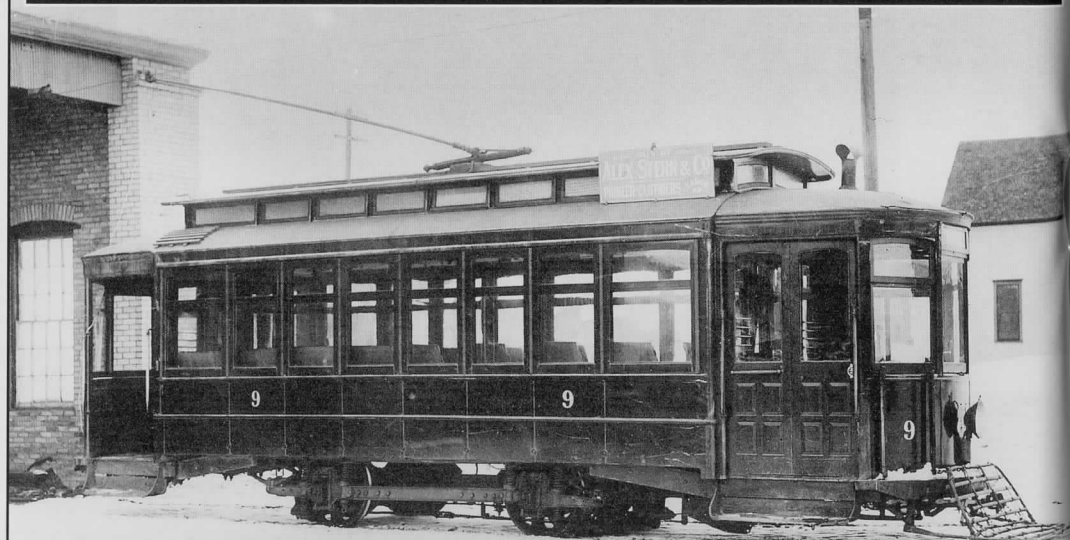
-Aaron Isaacs and Russell Olson

The Fargo-Moorhead roster was all single truckers, except for two double-truck cars acquired for the Dilworth line. There were basically two generations of cars. The system opened in 1904 and by 1906 the roster consisted of 11 single truck two-man closed motors, nine single truck open motors and a number of ex-TCRT single truckers used as trailers. After the Dilworth line opened in 1912, a pair of double truck cars was added. One-man Birneys replaced all older two-

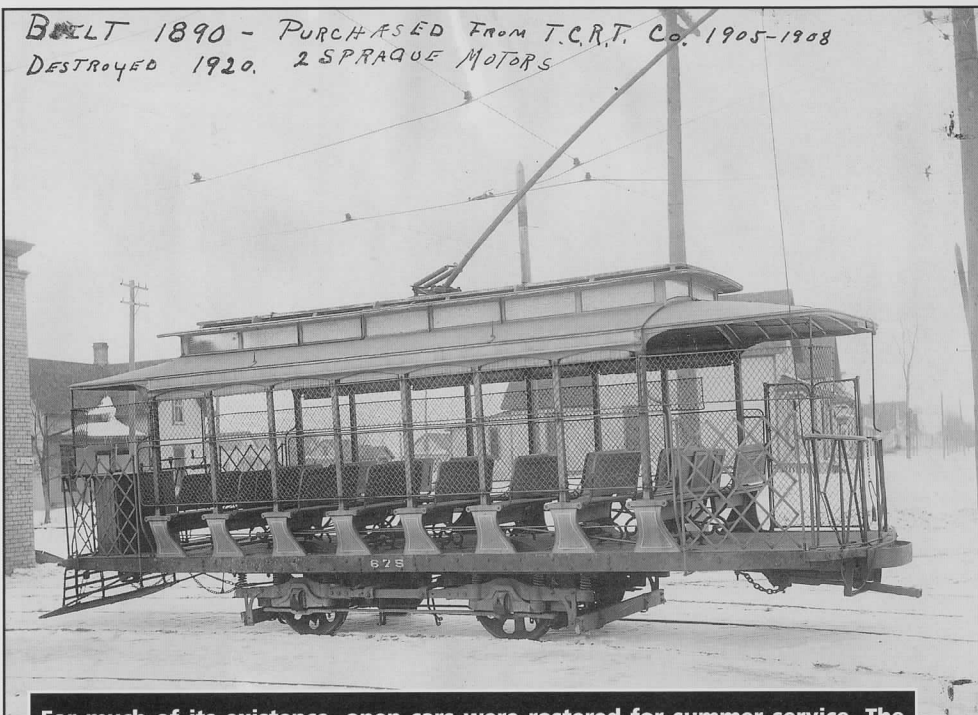
man cars in year-round service in 1920. Seven used single truck open cars were purchased that same year, presumably to replace the nine older open cars. Some older equipment including the trailers was kept on the roster until about 1930, although probably little used in later years. Apparently extra cars used for special events and the State Fair. Here is the roster as we've been able to recreate it. A few pieces of non-revenue equipment are unaccounted for.



Below: This is one of the four streetcars (#8-11) purchased in 1905 from the St. Louis Car Co. MSM collection. Contrast it with the seven Niles cars from 1904, pictured above. They were identical except for small details. North Dakota State University collection.



BELT 1890 - PURCHASED FROM T.C.R.T. Co. 1905-1908  
DESTROYED 1920. 2 SPRAGUE MOTORS

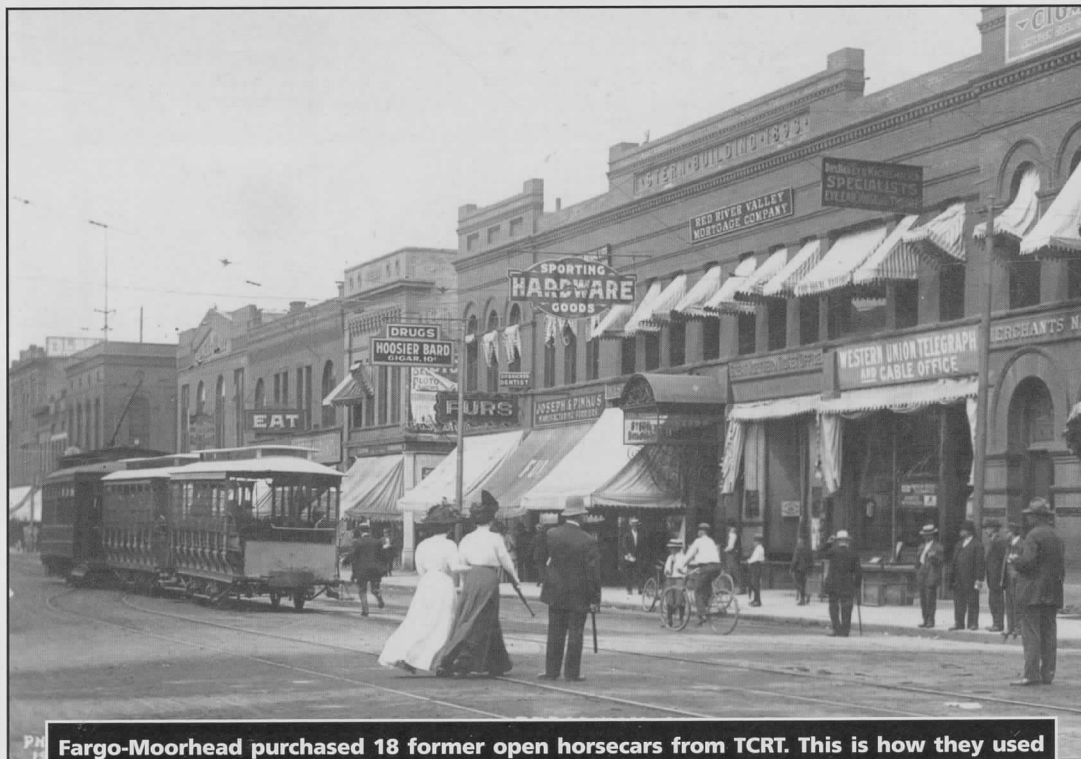


For much of its existence, open cars were rostered for summer service. The first group of nine were purchased used from TCRT. MSM collection.

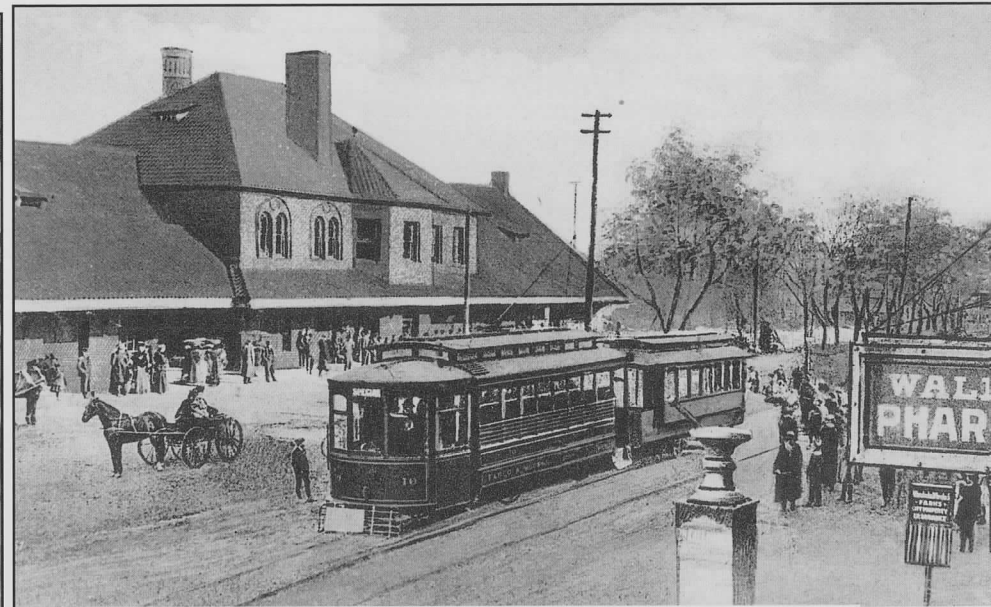
PURCHASED 1920  
FROM  
O. Ry. & L.T. Co.



In 1920, seven of these single truck open cars were purchased from "O. Ry. & Light Co.", but where was it? North Dakota State University collection.



Fargo-Moorhead purchased 18 former open horsecars from TCRT. This is how they used them. Note the man running for the rear steps. North Dakota State University collection.

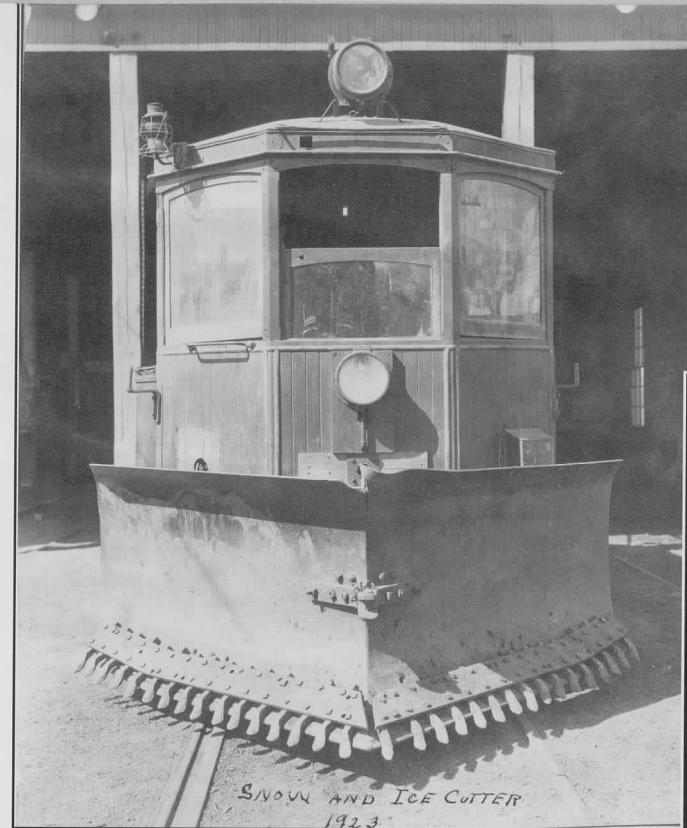


Besides the open trailers, Fargo-Moorhead also bought three 1891-vintage single truck closed streetcars from TCRT. This photo implies they were converted to trailers, in this case pulled by car #10, a 1905 St. Louis Car Co. product. It's passing the Northern Pacific depot on Front Street. University of North Dakota collection.





In 1913, used double truck streetcar #15 was purchased from Philadelphia for use on the interurban line to Dilworth, which had opened in 1912. It was one of only two double truck cars in the system. The broadside view below shows the aftermath of a train collision in 1920 that probably caused its retirement, since the Birneys were then being delivered. Fargo-Moorhead streetcars crossed mainline railroads at six locations, so collisions were always a danger. North Dakota State University collection.



Snowplow A3 changed in appearance somewhat after its purchase in 1905. Below: This appears to be at the carbarn on 4th Street. Note that there is double track in the street, probably a passing siding.

Left: By 1923, the shop had installed these fearsome looking ice cutters on the plow. North Dakota State University collection.

PURCHASED 1905 BRILL SNOW PLOW  
2 G.E. 67 MOTORS.



CAR #15 AFTER COLLISION WITH C.N. ENGINE AT 10TH STREET AND C.N. TRACKS, MOORHEAD APRIL 5 - 1920







Above: Sweeper A2 pushes a homemade pavement roller created from an arched bar freight car truck.

Below: Car #27 was the last of the first 15 Birneys delivered in 1920. This view gives us some details that will be useful for the restoration of car #28. The car has the same Johnson farebox used by TCRT, and walkover seats with uncushioned rattan backs. The front step folds down when the door opens. The logo says "Northern States Power Company Pioneers in Public Service". Both North Dakota State University collection.



Birneys couldn't have done well in heavy snow.



Buses began to appear in the 1920s. North Dakota State University collection.

## Service during the Birney Years

### -Aaron Isaacs

During the height of the Birney years in the mid-1920s, the Fargo-Moorhead system consisted of the following lines:

#### Fargo

##### North-South Loop line

The two large north and south loops ran as a single line, the largest in the system. The south loop is obvious from the map. The north loop used 15th Street and 7th Street. It required six streetcars. Newspaper accounts of the time say that service doubled when the one-man Birneys were acquired. Probably all the conductors were converted to motormen. It appears that prior to the Birneys, the loops had run every 15 minutes in one direction only. After the Birneys, cars ran each loop in both directions every 15 minutes. That meant that the outer ends of each loop saw a streetcar every 7.5 minutes. Each loop had passing sidings where timed meets happened, six meets per round trip.

Because the loops were single track, meets were scheduled at passing sidings on the loops (see map for locations)

11th St. N.

9th St. S.

4th Ave. and Broadway

00, 15, 30, 45 after the hour

12th Ave. N.

4th St. at 2nd Ave. S.

1st Ave. S. ?

7, 22, 37, 52 after the hour

##### Oak Grove Line

The Oak Grove Line consisted of a single car shuttling back and forth every 20 minutes between the Oak Grove and downtown at Northern

Pacific and Broadway. It probably looped downtown via 1st Avenue N. and 5th Street.

Lv Oak Grove 08, 28, 48 after the hour

Lv Northern Pacific and Broadway 00, 20, 40 after the hour

##### State Fair line

The former State Fair line appears to have been shortened to the corner of Broadway and 14th Avenue N. Like the Oak Grove line, it ran a 20-minute frequency with a single car. It appears to have been routed via North 4th Street. Like the Oak Grove line, it probably looped downtown via 1st Avenue N. and 5th Street.

Lv 14th Ave. N. 08, 28, 48 after the hour

Lv Northern Pacific and Broadway 16, 36, 56 after the hour

#### Moorhead

##### State Teachers College line

As the connector between Fargo and Moorhead, it ran every 15 minutes all the way to Northern Pacific and Broadway in Fargo. It required four cars, which represented a doubling of service when the Birneys arrived.

##### Courthouse line

The Moorhead Courthouse Line from 10th Street and 9th Avenue N. ran every 15 minutes with a single car that terminated at 6th and Front Street in Moorhead, where connections were made to Fargo, and with the other Moorhead lines. Front Street was renamed Center Street in 1922.

##### Concordia line

After it opened in 1923, the Concordia College line ran every 15 minutes with a single car that terminated at 6th and Front Street in Moorhead.

## Equipment Summary by Year

Year	Motors	Trailers	Non-rev.
1923	29	16	6
1924	29	16	6
1925	29	16	6
1926	26	14	5
1927	26	9	5
1928	25	1	6
1933	16	1	6

#### Dilworth line

The Dilworth line originally ran from Dilworth through Moorhead to Fargo once an hour. I believe that during the Birney era, it may have been shortened to 6th and Front Street in Moorhead, where connections were made to the Normal School line to reach Fargo.

## FARGO-MOORHEAD ALL-TIME ROSTER

Car	Type	Builder	Built
A2	Single truck snow sweeper	McGuire-Cummings	1912
A3	Single truck double ended snowplow	Brill	1905
1-7 (?)	Single truck closed motor	Niles	1904
8-11(?)	Single truck closed motor	St. Louis Car	1905
10	Double truck closed motor	American	1914
12-14	Single truck Birney	Cincinnati	1920
15	Double truck closed motor	Brill	1902
16-27	Single truck Birney	Cincinnati	1920
28	Single truck Birney	American	1923
59-66(?)	Single truck open motor		
100	Double truck flat car		1908
207	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
213	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
219	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
224-226	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
235	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
238	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
244-247	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
256-258	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
260-262	Single truck open trailer	J. M. Jones' Sons	1888
466	Single truck closed motor	J. M. Jones' Sons	1891
476	Single truck closed motor	J. M. Jones' Sons	1891
480	Single truck closed motor	J. M. Jones' Sons	1891
638-639	Single truck open motor	American	1893
651	Single truck open motor	American	1893
675	Single truck open motor	American	1893
687-688	Single truck open motor	American	1893
1591-1592	Single truck open motor	LaClede	1893
1629	Single truck open motor	LaClede	1893



## Car requirements

Add them up and the schedules described above required 15 Birneys, with one left over as a spare.

### Cars      Line

- 6   Fargo loops line
- 1   Oak Grove
- 1   14th Ave. N.
- 4   State Teachers College
- 1   Moorhead Court House
- 1   Concordia College
- 1   Dilworth
- 15   Total plus one spare

## Comments

2nd car for Dilworth line

1st car for Dilworth line,  
ex-Philadelphia Rapid Transit  
#1906, purchased 1913, probably  
retired 1920

Built for Concordia College line, now  
owned by MSM  
7 cars purchased 1920 from O Ry &  
Light Co.  
Replacements for the 9 ex-TCRT 1891-  
vintage open cars?

Ex-TCRT horsecar, purchased 1906  
Ex-TCRT horsecar, purchased 1906  
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Ex-TCRT, purchased 1906  
Ex-TCRT, purchased 1906



Yet another view looking north from Front Street across the NP tracks. This is similar to the scene on the rear cover. North Dakota State University collection.

# FARGO & MOORHEAD ST. RY.

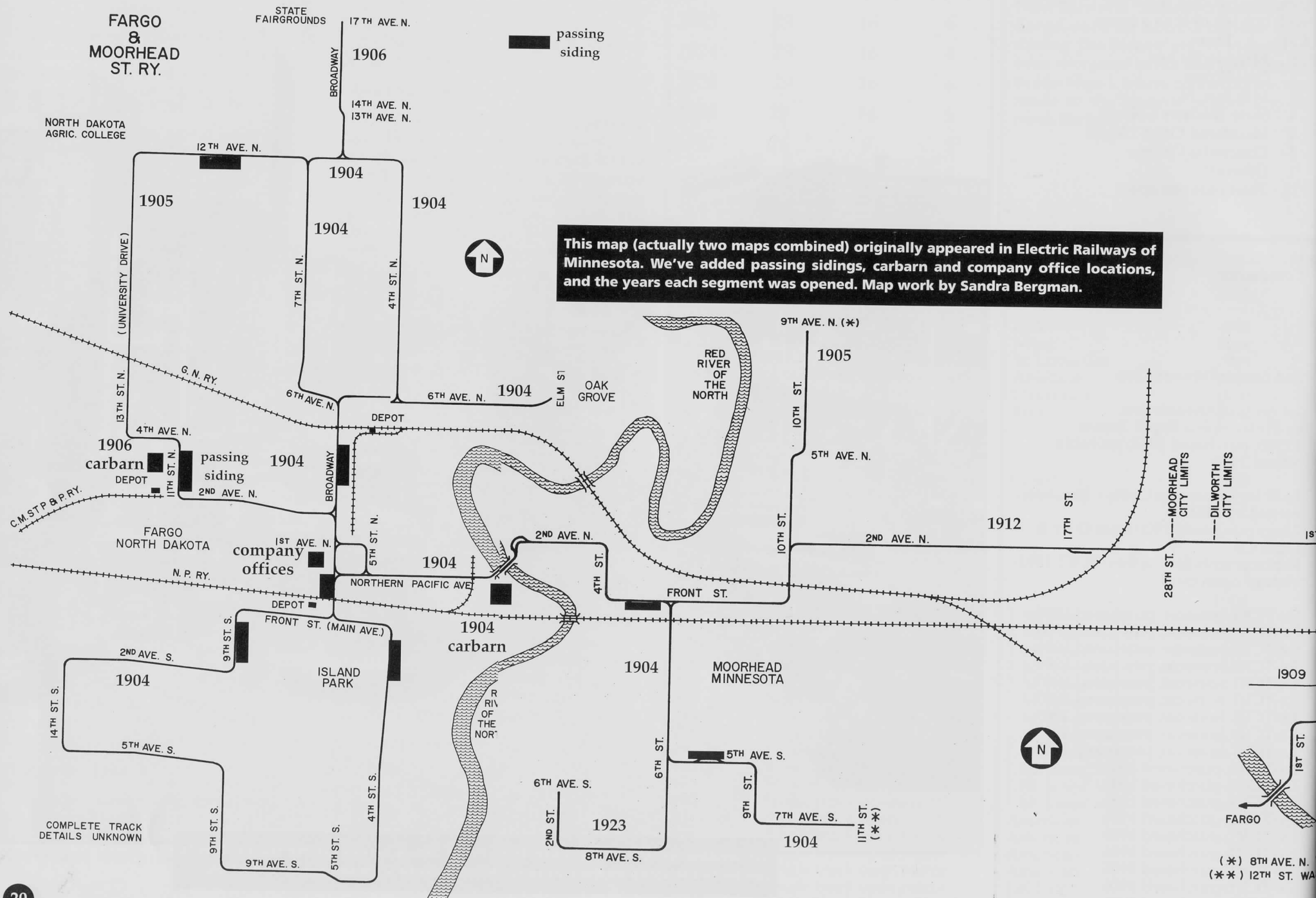
NORTH DAKOTA AGRIC. COLLEGE

STATE FAIRGROUNDS

passing siding

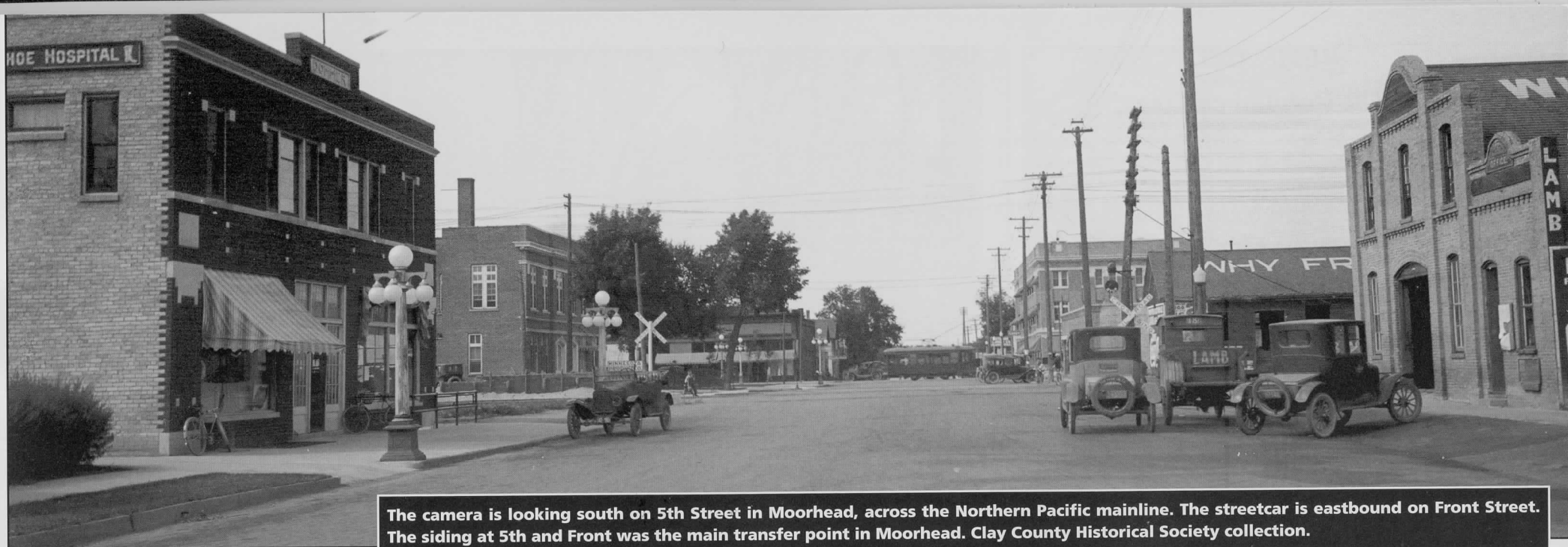


This map (actually two maps combined) originally appeared in Electric Railways of Minnesota. We've added passing sidings, carbarn and company office locations, and the years each segment was opened. Map work by Sandra Bergman.

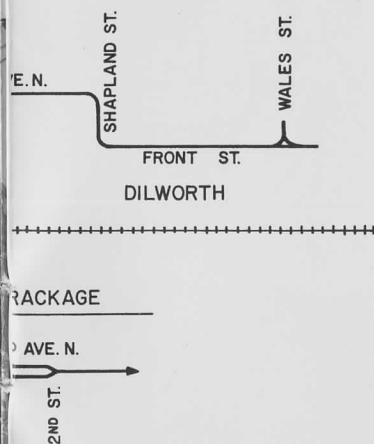


(\*) 8TH AVE. N.  
(\*\*) 12TH ST. WA





The camera is looking south on 5th Street in Moorhead, across the Northern Pacific mainline. The streetcar is eastbound on Front Street. The siding at 5th and Front was the main transfer point in Moorhead. Clay County Historical Society collection.



S 1909 TERMINUS  
1909 TERMINUS



Birney #28 resides temporarily at Ken Albrecht's in North Mankato. Left to right are Jim Vaitkunas, Jim Willmore, Ken Albrecht and Bill Arends.

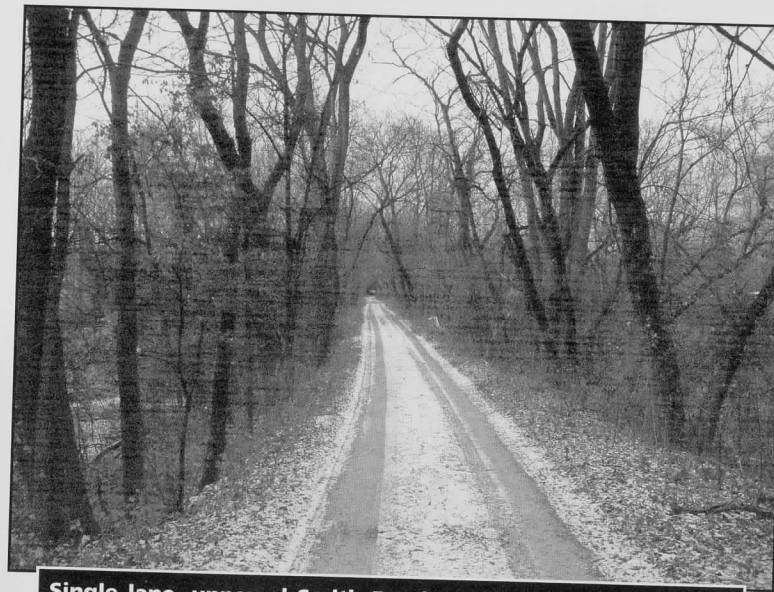
## REMNANTS

### *The Deephaven Line*

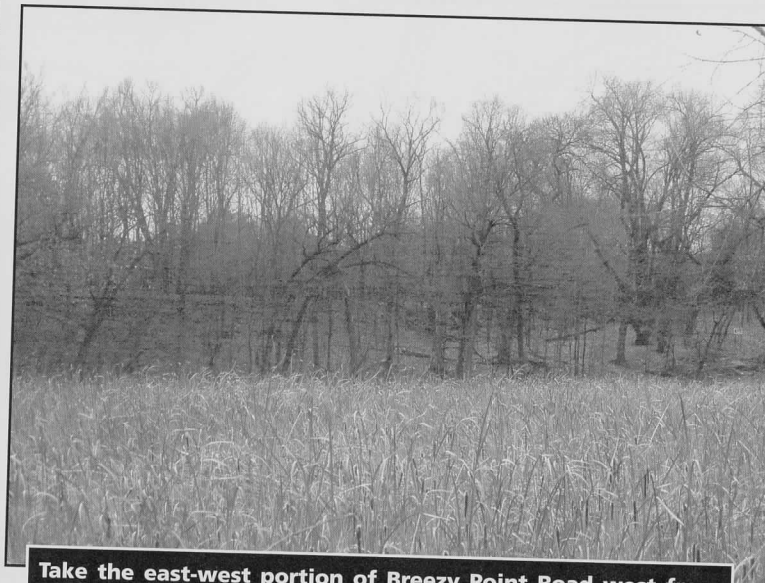
If you know where to look when the leaves are off the trees, you can find portions of the TCRT Deephaven line. It ran on private right-of-way from Hopkins to Deephaven, and some surprising pieces of it survive, even though it's been gone since 1932.



Drive through Hopkins on Excelsior Boulevard and you're actually on the right of way of TCRT's high speed interurban to Excelsior. Continue past Shady Oak Road and you'll come to Junction Park. This was Deephaven Junction, where TCRT's ex-Milwaukee Road single track Deephaven line began. Junction Road, curving right beyond the sign in the above photo, is on the old right of way. Below: Excelsior Boulevard, at left, is the former TCRT main line to Excelsior. Junction Park is at right. All Aaron Isaacs photos.

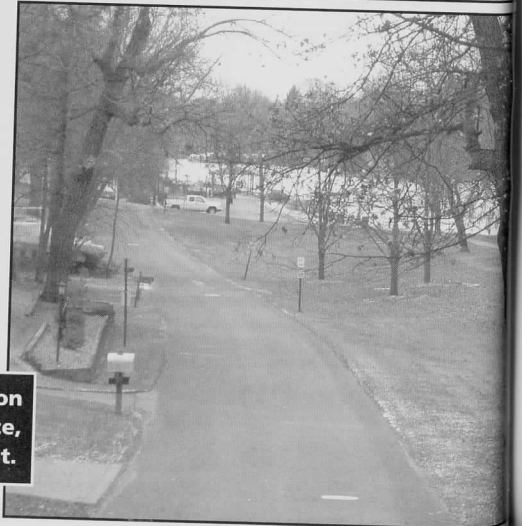
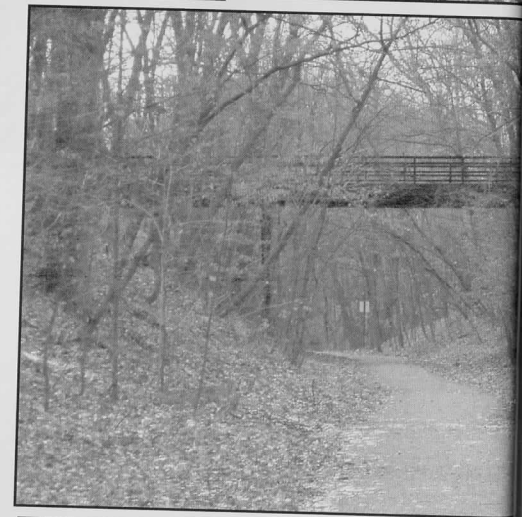


Single lane, unpaved Smith Road occupies the right of way from Baker Road west to I-494. It's hard to spot, because the trolley passed through here on a lower grade than Baker.



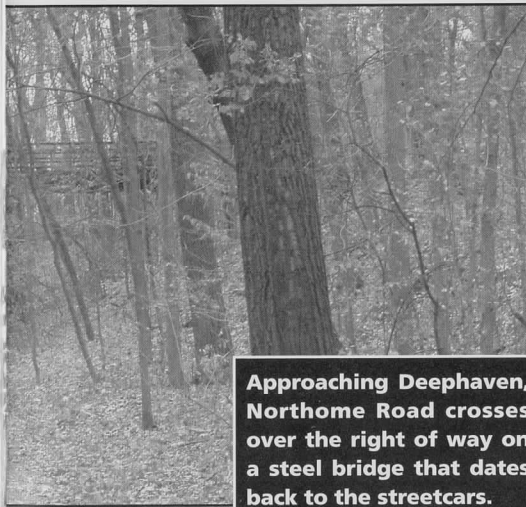
Take the east-west portion of Breezy Point Road west from Highway 101. It drops down to run through a marsh. A block to the south, the right of way skirts the marsh on a fill.

Breezy Point Road twists and turns downhill from Minnetonka Boulevard at Chowan's Corner. At its low point it crosses the right of way. Next to the road sits a small, oblong house. It's the original Breezy Point open waiting shelter, built by the Milwaukee Road.



Looking toward the Deephaven station site and Carson's Bay in the distance, the right of way is the dirt trail at right.





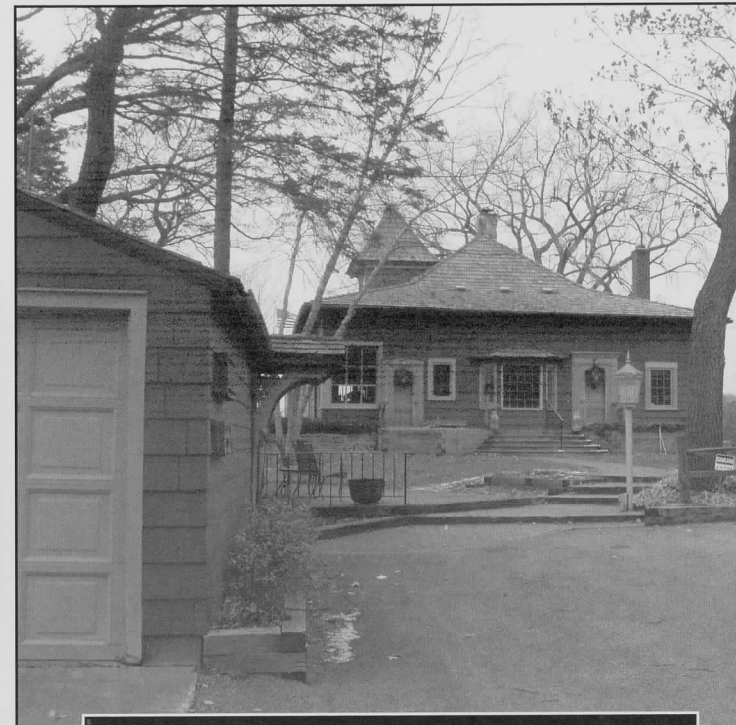
Approaching Deephaven, Northome Road crosses over the right of way on a steel bridge that dates back to the streetcars.



This is the Deephaven station site, then and now. At 45 minutes past each hour, the Deephaven car met the Excelsior-Wayzata express boat and its Wayzata-Excelsior counterpart at this dock.



Rear cover: A southbound loop car has just crossed the Northern Pacific main line and will turn right onto Front Street. Streetcars ran the north side and south side loops in both directions. It appears this photo was taken to record a parade of farm tractors, possibly a protest of some sort in the depths of the Great Depression. North Dakota State University collection.



The Deephaven depot survives as a residence, relocated a block up the hill from its original site.

